

Hanalei Pier
In Hanalei Bay, off Weke Road
Hanalei
Kauai County
Hawaii

HAER No. HI-17

HAER
HI,
4-HANLI,
5-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
Western Regional Office
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
San Francisco, California 94102

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

Hanalei Pier

HAER No. HI-17

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Location: In Hanalei Bay, off Weke Road, approximately 0.50 mile north of Aku Road and Kuhio Highway intersection
Hanalei, Kauai County, Island of Kauai, Hawaii

UTM: 04.448400.2456810
Quad: Hanalei

Date of Construction: 1912. Altered in 1922, 1940, 1973

Present owner: Department of Transportation
State of Hawaii
79 South Nimitz Highway
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Present use: Recreational fishing and sightseeing. To be partially demolished in 1991

Significance: The Hanalei Pier is historically significant as one of the last remaining vestiges of the rice industry in Hanalei. The pier is also significant for its association with transportation history in Hawaii. In the early 20th century, Hanalei served as an important local shipping center for Kauai. The Hanalei Pier was placed on the Hawaii Register of Historic Places on July 28, 1979. On September 13, 1979, the pier was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

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Date: February 21, 1991

The Hanalei Pier is located on the eastern side of Hanalei Bay, near the mouth of the Hanalei River on the island of Kauai. The pier adjoins the County of Kauai's Black Pot County Park at the northern end of Weke Road.

The steel reinforced concrete finger pier extends 535 feet from Weke Road into the waters of Hanalei Bay. It consists of a 12.5 feet wide by 465 feet long concrete approach ramp which extends approximately 305 feet into Hanalei Bay to a 30 foot by 70 foot concrete platform covered with a wooden shed.

Railroad tracks sit within a bed of sand and gravel throughout the approach ramp and the platform area. The track bed in the platform area has been filled with concrete. These tracks were used solely to service the pier and did not connect to any line. The approach ramp and platform are supported by 14-inch square concrete piles with pile caps and knee braces. The pilings for the approach ramp are spaced approximately 15 feet on center and the pilings under the platform are spaced approximately 10 feet on center.

The open wooden shed located on the platform area has a gable type of roof covered with corrugated asbestos roofing. The shed is approximately 72.5 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 16 feet high at the highest point.

The present pier, constructed in 1912 with a wooden deck, replaced an earlier, shorter pier which predated 1892. Due to the difficulty in maintaining the wooden deck, the Territorial Legislature in 1921 appropriated funds for the construction of a concrete deck. The wooden decking was subsequently replaced with reinforced concrete in 1922. The shed at the end of the pier, originally built in 1940, was reinforced and reroofed in 1973.

The Hanalei Pier is significant as an example of a typical finger pier that was constructed in Hawaii. It is one of the best known piers in the State because of its magnificent setting. It has been used in most promotional pictures of the area and has been featured in several movies, the most notable being South Pacific.

With its strong association with the transportation of Hanalei's rice to Honolulu, the pier is historically significant as one of the last remaining vestiges of the rice industry in Hanalei. The Chinese were cultivating rice at Hanalei at least by 1882 and, by 1892, Hanalei and Waioli, with 750 acres of land devoted to rice farming, was the largest rice producing area in Hawaii. At this time, rice was the number two agricultural produce of the Hawaiian kingdom, having developed as a major crop in the 1860s, when numerous Chinese farmers left the sugar plantations following the expiration of their five-year contracts. Occupying taro patches vacated by a declining Hawaiian population, these farmers found a ready market for their product in Honolulu and California. At the time of annexation, Hawaii was third in rice production in the United States. Annexation, however, spelled the downfall of rice production in most areas of Hawaii. The removal of all tariffs boomed the sugar industry and caused agricultural land costs to rise, forcing much of the rice land to be converted to sugar production. By 1934, the acreage devoted to rice farming in Hawaii had declined to 1,090. By this time, Hanalei was producing over two-thirds of Hawaii's rice, making it the last major rice production center in Hawaii.

The pier is also significant for its association with transportation history in Hawaii. Since the Hawaiian islands were separated from one another and the rest of the world by the Pacific Ocean, ships and boats have been the major means of transporting goods between the islands and frequently to different areas of the same island. Large-scale development of Nawiliwili Harbor commenced in 1926 and with its completion in 1930, Nawiliwili became Kauai's primary harbor. As a result of little use, Hanalei Pier was abandoned in 1933, marking the end of inter-island transportation. From the 1940s until the present, the pier has been primarily a recreational resource for the residents of Kauai for fishing or picnicking. Located adjacent to a county beach park, the pier is a highly scenic attraction to the visitors and residents alike.

At present, the pier is in a deteriorated condition, with considerable spalling under the deck and cracks in several of the concrete pilings. Years of wave action have eroded the concrete, corroded the steel reinforcement and caused large chunks of the concrete decking to collapse at the end of the pier.

The state plans to reconstruct the pier in phases, beginning with work on the outermost portion of the pier and working shoreward. When completed the reconstructed pier will resemble the existing pier and the historical architecture of the pier will be retained.

REFERENCES

State of Hawaii, Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of State Parks, Final Environmental Impact Statement for Reconstruction of Hanalei Pier, Hanalei, Kauai, June 1990.

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places Inventory--Nomination Form for Hanalei Pier, April 1979.